Questions & Answers
Federal Collaboration with CDC to Study the Connection of Housing and HIV

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Note. The items presented below are for informational purposes only. They are expected to be accurate, but not guaranteed to be accurate.

What is this project?

It is a collaborative project between the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to study the impact of providing housing for homeless or unstably housed persons on the transmission of HIV and the health of persons living with HIV. HUD has designated this project as a Special Project of National Significance (SPNS). Researchers from Research Triangle Institute (RTI), Columbia University, and Emory University are playing key roles in this research project.

What are the advantages of this project for my agency or organization?

- Opportunity to collaborate with HUD, CDC, and nationally recognized researchers on a SPNS project that will answer important questions about the influence of housing on the health and risk behavior of people living with HIV.
- Grantees will receive additional resources to help meet the needs of homeless or unstably housed HOPWA-eligible study participants.
- CDC will provide resources to support up to two full-time housing referral specialists during the funding period. These persons will increase grantee's ability to serve HOPWA-eligible persons.
- Grantees will receive summary information about the characteristics of HOPWA-eligible persons that will help them document the needs of their client population. This information may be used for future funding opportunities or to improve program services.
- The study will provide information about the cost effectiveness of housing for persons living with HIV. This information may help grantees demonstrate the benefits of housing to policy makers.

What are the advantages of this project for my community?

- Greater capacity to address issues associated with HIV and homelessness.
- Comprehensive research information about HIV-positive persons who are homeless or unstably housed in your community can assist with program planning and the development of local policies.
- If successful, this project will reduce HIV transmission rates and improve the health and well-being of persons living with HIV.

What are the advantages of this project for participants?

- All study participants will receive health counseling, assistance with finding housing, and other services provided by your agency and other agencies.
- All participants will also receive lab results and information about their health status from trained staff and nurses.

- In addition, half of the HOPWA-eligible people *selected for the study* at each site will receive housing vouchers. Those who are not chosen to receive vouchers through this study will still be eligible to receive housing assistance through other funding.

What is the involvement of my agency/organization in this research study?

- Once awards are made, there will be collaboration with HUD, CDC, and the other researchers to set up the study in your site. This will involve time from some of your staff for discussion of issues regarding the study.
- Below is a list of potential activities with which you will be asked to participate.
  - Advising on best procedures for marketing the study to clients
  - Advising on best way to implement the study in your site
  - Becoming a member of the Steering Committee to discuss study protocol and implementation issues
  - Screening potential participants for HOPWA eligibility
  - Refer eligible persons to the study
  - Providing necessary records to HUD and/or CDC
- It would be ideal if there is space available in your agency/organization for the researchers conducting the study. As funding allows, you may be reimbursed for office space used by the research study staff. If space is not available within your agency, it would be helpful if you could provide suggestions for locations to conduct the study near your agency site.
- The funding agencies have tried to reduce the burden on your agency by providing the staff necessary to conduct the study. The research staff will be hired and supervised by a contractor working with the funding agencies.
- Your agency/organization will <u>not</u> be responsible for collecting data for this study. All of the research data will be collected by RTI and its contractors.

How many agencies/organizations will be selected to participate in this research study?

- Three sites will be selected from the applicant pool to participate in this research study.

How many HOPWA-eligible people will participate in this research study?

- In the preliminary pilot study 20 people from each of the three selected sites will participate (a total of 60 people).
- For the intervention trial approximately 335 from each of the three selected sites will participate (a total of 1000 people).

What is the general procedure for the participants in the study?

There will be several sessions for the study. All participants will receive the same information and opportunities for services. They will also all receive two sessions to discuss health and risk reduction behaviors.

Below is a list of what each participant will complete.

- Determine eligibility and consent to participate in the study.
- Baseline Session 1
  - Answer a set of questionnaires on topics such as current housing, sexual behaviors, alcohol and drug use, medical services

    - Health First Session 1 (client-centered counseling and HIV intervention)
    - Blood draw (they have the option to not participate in this portion)
- Baseline Session 2 (approximately 1-2 weeks after first session)
    - Health First Session 2
    - Receive lab results
    - Assignment to study condition
- 6-month follow-up
- 12-month follow-up
- 18-month follow-up

For each of the follow-up sessions participants will complete the following:

- A set of questionnaires similar to the baseline questionnaires
- Blood draw (they have the option to not participate in this portion)

What is the timeline for this project?

The timeline is dependent on the actual date of award. Below is a rough estimate of the activities and anticipated timeline.

- Fall 2003 – Winter 2004: Study coordination with sites and study set-up
- Spring 2004: Pilot test with each selected agency
- Summer 2004: Marketing the study to potential participants
- Summer – Fall 2004: Study enrollment; collect baseline data
- Winter 2005: 6-month follow-up data collection
- Fall 2005: 12-month follow-up data collection
- Winter 2006: 18-month follow-up data collection
- Summer 2006: End of study